

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
AUTHORIZING CONGRESS TO
PROHIBIT PHYSICAL DESECRA-
TION OF THE FLAG OF THE
UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2003

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, House Joint Resolution 4 does not outlaw flag desecration; rather, this proposal merely sets the boundaries by which Congress can enact subsequent legislation, if it so chooses, to prohibit such conduct. H.J. Res. 4 simply returns to Congress the authority that it possessed for over 200 years to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.

This past week, I visited North Korea, where freedom is nowhere and democratic thought is oppressed. Our American flag is the most revered and beloved symbol of our Nation, representing all that is American and reminding the world of our love of our freedom and democracy. The flag is a bedrock of our principles and values as a country, leading our men and women into conflicts around the globe and draping the caskets of those same individuals when they return home after giving the ultimate sacrifice in defense of such values. It is the flag to which we pledge allegiance, here on the floor of the House of Representatives, in civic organizations in every town in America, and in schools throughout our country. It is this object and all that it represents that Americans hold so dear.

House Joint Resolution 4 will nullify two erroneous Supreme Court decisions, restoring the original interpretation to the First Amendment that had persisted for over two centuries since the birth of our country. When considering the powers of our respective branches of government in effecting the will of the American people, we should be reminded of the words of Abraham Lincoln in his first inaugural address in 1861, "If the policy of the government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers."

I commend my colleagues for recognizing the wishes of the American people and restoring the original interpretation and understanding of the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights to the Constitution by supporting this resolution.

COLONEL TIMOTHY WRIGHTON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual and patriot whose dedication and contributions to his country and the military community of March Air Reserve Base, March ARB, in Riverside, CA, are exceptional. March ARB has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Colonel Timothy Wrighton is one of these individuals. On June 6, 2003, he will be honored at a farewell celebration and dinner.

After completing his education at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, and receiving a degree in engineering Tim completed his undergraduate pilot training in 1976 and in 1977 he became a First Lieutenant. Tim served as a C-141 pilot for the 53rd Military Airlift Squadron out of Norton Air Force Base in California from 1976 to 1982 during which time he was promoted to Captain. In 1984, he was assigned as the chief pilot for the 728th Military Airlift Squadron. Three years later he was promoted to Major and was assigned as the chief of wing standardization/evaluation for the 445th Airlift Wing at Norton and would later become assistant deputy commander for operations. Over the next 13 years he would be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and then Colonel. Since 2002 he has been the Commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing at March Air Reserve Base. Col. Wrighton has logged over 7,800 flight hours in a variety of aircraft including the C-141 A/B, KC-10, and KC-135R.

Col. Wrighton has received numerous awards throughout his distinguished career including: Legion of Merit; Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters; Air Medal; Aerial Achievement Medal; Air Force Commendation Medal; Air Force Achievement Medal; Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with oak leaf clusters; National Defense Service Medal; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Southwest Asia Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters; Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon; Air Force Training Ribbon; and the Kuwait Liberation Medal from the Saudi Arabian Government.

Col. Wrighton is also a life member and Chapter President of the Reserve Officers' Association, a Life Member of the Airlift/Tanker Association, Life Member of the AFA, a Life Member of the VFW and a Member of Daedalians.

Col. Wrighton's tireless commitment to service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the country and the community of Riverside, CA. I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his patriotic service and salute him.

HONORING MELVIN E. OLSSON

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Melvin E. Olsson of Mystic, CT, for his dedicated service to the community throughout his 43-year career at Electric Boat in Groton, CT.

Yesterday, for the first time in 13 years, Mel Olsson's name did not appear on the ballot for the Marine Draftsmen's Association, MDA, union elections at Electric Boat. Olsson is retiring from his post as president of the local 571 at Electric Boat and will return to his trade as piping designer.

Mel began as an apprentice in the shipyard in 1962 and moved to the design force just 2 years later. Elected vice president of the local in 1975, Olsson has dedicated much of his career to serving the MDA.

I commend Mel Olsson for his dedicated service to the working men and women of Electric Boat who design the best submarines in the world. He has worked to establish a re-

lationship with the company that is better than it has ever been. Mel is a true leader in his community and a role model for the future leaders of the MDA.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Members of the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Melvin Olsson for his 13 years of service as head of the MDA. I wish him all the best.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO POLICE
CHIEF LONNIE WESTPHAL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand before this body of Congress today to pay tribute to an individual who has dedicated his life to protecting the American public. Lonnie Westphal of Lakespur, Colorado first donned the badge of a Colorado State Patrolman 29 years ago. This week he will retire from the force after an impressive career in which he rose in the ranks from a state trooper to the head of the Colorado State Patrol.

Chief Westphal is one of those special people in our society who willingly put themselves in harm's way to protect the public. He knew he would never get rich in his chosen profession, but he also knew that some things, such as keeping our families out of harm's way, come with rewards not measured by monetary means. Thus, it is not surprising that Chief Westphal distinguished himself so honorably by serving on numerous boards such as the National Commission Against Drunk Driving, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the State Patrol Protective Association, and many more.

Mr. Speaker, our nation owes a great debt to Chief Westphal and all brave heroes like him who keep the peace at home. Because of his service, the state of Colorado is a better and safer place to live. I thank Chief Westphal for his service to his community, the State of Colorado, and this nation. All the best to you, Lonnie; enjoy your retirement!

TRIBUTE TO MR. AND MRS.
DONALD WALLACE OF FLORENCE

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wallace of Florence, AL. For 23 years, they have provided outstanding service to the American Legion—Mr. Wallace as adjutant and Mrs. Wallace as his assistant.

Mr. Wallace began serving the American Legion as an assistant to the former adjutant and will be retiring later this month. As adjutant, Mr. Wallace was charged with maintaining both the records and activities of the group of over 1,000; however, he did not limit himself to those tasks. Mr. Wallace helped rebuild

the American Legion's reputation as both a veteran's advocacy and community service organization. Under Wallace's leadership, the post received state and national attention as a leader in supporting the Boys State Program, a program which teaches lessons of patriotism and civics to high school juniors. He also worked with the American Legion Baseball program and oratorical contests that offered scholarships to local participants.

Although Mr. Wallace does not like taking credit for the success of the group, many veterans and families in the Shoals will tell you that without him the Legion would not be what it is today. Wallace simply believes that his work at the American Legion is just the continuation of work begun by an earlier generation, the original Legionnaires who established the post in 1919 and the World War I veterans who built their current hall in 1939. As adjutant, Wallace helped maintain this building that has been their home for 64 years.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to pay tribute to Mr. Wallace's wife of 60 years, Mrs. Ellen Wallace. As his assistant at the Legion, Mrs. Wallace filed paperwork and served with the Ladies Auxiliary during the chicken stews and other activities. Mr. Wallace credits her with making him the man he is today.

Despite the irregular hours, low pay, and lack of prestige, both Mr. and Mrs. Wallace enjoyed helping many people during their time of service with the American Legion. They have dedicated themselves to their community, and on behalf of the people of north Alabama I thank them for their service and congratulate them on a job well done.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing a bill with my friend, the chairman of the Veterans Affairs Health Subcommittee, ROB SIMMONS. This bill will authorize several desperately needed major medical construction projects in Chicago, IL; San Diego, CA; Las Vegas, NV; and West Haven, CT. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill to jump start the stalled major medical construction endeavor in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

My bill would honor the commitment the Department of Veterans Affairs made to build a new bed tower at the West Side division of VA Chicago. While Secretary Anthony Principi has decided to move forward with the closure of inpatient services at the Lakeside division, he has not asked for an appropriation for the new construction project at West Side. Instead, the funding for this project—\$98.5 million—is supposed to come from an enhanced use lease agreement whose value some experts claim has been greatly overestimated. I am not willing to make such a gamble on veterans' access to a functional medical center in the Chicago area.

The West Side facility is a 50-year old facility ill-suited to respond to the demands of a modern health care delivery system, even

without the additional workload anticipated from the integration with Lakeside scheduled for early August. VA Chicago is working to accommodate its inpatients in a facility that has inadequate intensive care units, inpatient units, and surgical suites. Once the new facility is operational, the existing facility will also have to undergo significant renovations to improve the emergency department, laboratory and radiological services, and food and nutritional areas.

Because of the importance and the urgency of this project, my legislation would prohibit VA Chicago from disposing, in any manner, of the Lakeside division without first entering into a contract for the construction of the new bed tower promised to Chicago area veterans.

The bill would also fund a project to replace the existing ambulatory care center in Las Vegas, NV. As my good friend, Shelley Berkley often reminds the Committee, Las Vegas has the fastest growing populations in the country and its veteran enrollees are not expected to peak until 2012. Veterans' use of services is expected to remain higher than it is currently throughout the 20-year timeframe studied for VA's Capital Assets Realignment for Enhanced Services project.

Unfortunately, in constructing a new ambulatory care clinic there in 1997, VA seems to have fallen prey to a contractor whose work was seriously substandard. An independent assessment by John A. Martin and Associates yielded an opinion that the clinic was "unsafe for continued occupancy." Because of the contractor's repeated failure to address serious structural deficiencies in the building, VA is now forced to abandon it. As an interim measure, VA is sending its patients to 10 different ambulatory care clinics around the city. This inefficient delivery system is forcing VA to add 80 full-time employees with significant new operational costs. My bill would request \$97.3 million to build a new centralized facility that would also include space for a new regional office for the Veterans Benefits Administration.

In FY 2002, VA listed seismic corrections at the San Diego VA Medical Center as one of its highest construction priorities. Later, I am told, cost considerations—not any change in the assessment of need—yielded a lower priority for the project. I am still convinced that there is a great risk to VA patients and staff at the site and my bill would authorize \$48.6 million to address the needs at the facility.

West Haven VA Medical Center is in serious need of major renovations to its inpatient wards and research facilities. For many years, the inpatient ward renovations have been a high priority for VA construction, but resources have not allowed the project to move forward. I am requesting \$50 million for this project and to renovate the research facilities.

Finally, Charlotte, NC, is home to one of the largest populations in the country without a significant VA health care system presence. The project requested in this bill would allow VA to greatly expand its current workload in a clinic in the downtown area and enroll veterans who are now unable to receive care. I have included \$3 million for the cost of the lease.

All of these projects merit our immediate attention and approval by all Members. I urge your favorable consideration.

HONORING COLE REVIS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a profound sense of pride that I stand before this Congress to speak about the actions of Cole Revis. Cole, a second grader in Grand Junction, Colorado, has shown more kindness and maturity in the face of adversity than most people have three times his age. Cole's father, a veteran of the first Gulf War, passed away this spring from skin cancer. Cole understood the sacrifices his father made in the service of our country and he is trying his best to follow his father's courageous example.

Mark Revis, Cole's father, was a Staff Sergeant in the 143rd Signal Company of the Colorado National Guard for six years, having previously served for 14 years in the Army. Mark was forced to retire from the National Guard when he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. He was later diagnosed with lung cancer and then skin cancer. Mark fought each disease and that same fighting spirit is evident in his son. He passed away in February, at the age of 44.

After receiving a death benefit check from the government, Cole felt strongly that this inheritance should go to his father's fellow soldiers. While most eight year olds would have bought candy, Cole wanted to use his money in a way that would help others. So Cole decided his money would be spent buying care packages for United States troops serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to speak today about Cole Revis. His passion, kindness, maturity and heart are an inspiration to us all. Cole's optimism and understanding of the role and duty that his father fulfilled have allowed him to understand that while his father is gone, his actions will never be forgotten. I know that if he were here today, Mark Revis would be extremely proud of his son. Thank you, Cole. Your actions are a testament to the will and unyielding strength that America's youth represents.

RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN AND SUPPORTED OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM IN AFGHANISTAN AND OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM IN IRAQ

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, with yesterday's passage of H. Con. Res. 177, we formally recognized and commended our Armed Forces for their participation and success in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our magnificent men and women in uniform serve as the greatest ambassadors of what is good and right in our world. They are the bearers of the tremendous might, the indomitable spirit, and the boundless compassion of our nation and the freedom loving people everywhere.